



California Postsecondary Education Commission

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CSU Chico Awarded \$944,415 Improving Teacher Quality Grant

SACRAMENTO — October 22, 2007 — California State University, Chico has won funding for a new professional development project to help improve teaching in kindergarten through second grade in the core content area of mathematics. The university was awarded a four-year grant of \$944,415 by the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) in a statewide competition. The project, titled “Mathematics in the Early Grades (MEG),” is a partnership between the university, the Red Bluff Union Elementary School District, Orland Unified School District, Cascade Union School District, and the Tehama County Department of Education. 27 teachers from the small rural school districts, including special education resource teachers, will participate in summer institutes and receive school-year coaching and follow-up training. Selected teachers will also work in summer academies with students. All the teachers will strengthen their ability to teach mathematics to primary grade students and build learning communities with other educators in the region.

The grant is part of the federal Improving Teacher Quality Program funded under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. It is the latest edition of a long-standing federal program aimed at improving student achievement through professional development for teachers. In the two decades that CPEC has administered the program, more than \$93 million in grants have been awarded to colleges and universities working with high-need K-12 schools throughout California. The 2007 grants all focus on supporting teachers in kindergarten through second grade in participating schools. They also require rigorous evaluation research to demonstrate how the professional development affects student achievement as well as teacher practice.

While the professional development provided by the grants is vitally needed, the research requirement is especially important, according to CPEC Executive Director Murray Haberman. He observed that “Being required to demonstrate the impact of the professional development on student achievement, not just on teacher practice, is critical and supports CPEC’s overall commitment to accountability in educational programs.”

Olivia Singh, chair of the Commission, says the grants play an important role in making sure every student has a highly qualified teacher. “The program has had a long-term impact on helping teachers strengthen their content knowledge and their understanding of effective teaching strategies—key elements of education reform,” noted Singh. “CSU Chico and its

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partner schools should be proud of the quality of their proposal and its potential for improving teaching and learning in the upper Sacramento Valley.”

The California Postsecondary Education Commission advises the Governor and Legislature on higher education policy and fiscal issues. Its primary focus is to ensure that the state’s educational resources are used effectively to provide Californians with postsecondary education opportunities. More information about the Commission and its work can be found on its website at www.cpec.ca.gov. For more information about the state program, contact Karen Humphrey, Administrator, Improving Teacher Quality Program, at 916-445-1504 or khumphrey@cpec.ca.gov. For information on the project described above, contact Dr. Jorgen Berglund at 530-898-5350 or jjberglund@csuchico.edu.

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